

THE EAST ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

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PETER GLUCK DESIGNS CONTROVERSIAL TOWER FOR OLD CITY PHILLY



COURTESY PETER GLUCK AND PARTNERS

TOWERING ABOVE BEN

On August 21 Philadelphia's new zoning code went into effect, but projects conceived under the old code may still be rising. Just one week into the new code, architect Peter Gluck presented a tower proposal to the Old

City Civic Association (OCCA) for a 16-story building adjacent to the Benjamin Franklin Bridge. The zoning permits were filed in July, so the project can follow the old code.

The reception to **continued on page 4**

A VOYAGE TO VENICE.
SEE PAGE 13.



FRANCESCO GALLI/COURTESY: LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA



COURTESY NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM

PAUL GOLDBERGER WINS SCULLY PRIZE, SPEECH TO FOCUS ON THE NEED FOR EXPERTISE IN MEDIA

A CALL TO CRITICAL ARMS

It's been a dizzying year for readers who follow architecture critic Paul Goldberger. Recently deposed as architecture critic at *The New Yorker*, he quickly rebounded as a *Vanity Fair* **continued on page 5**

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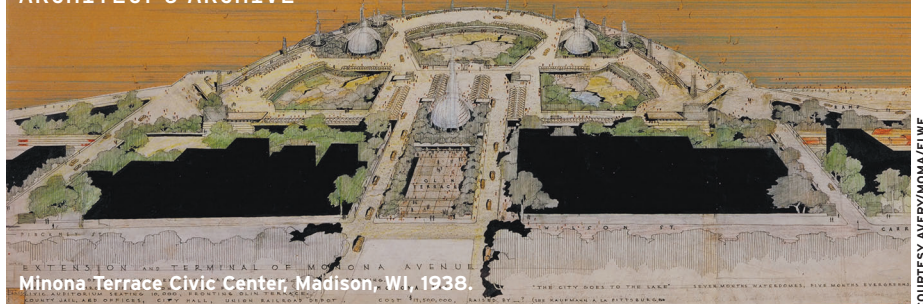
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MOMA AND COLUMBIA TO JOINTLY HOUSE ICONOCLASTIC ARCHITECT'S ARCHIVE



COURTESY AVERY/MOMA/FLWF

WRIGHT AT HOME

Frank Lloyd Wright had a famously contentious relationship with cities and with New York in particular. New York City, however, will be the final home for much of his architectural output, thanks to a groundbreaking partnership by Columbia

University's Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library and the Museum of Modern Art to acquire his drawings, models, photographs, and office correspondence.

The massive collection includes 23,000 architectural drawings, **continued on page 3**

A school by PKSB.



Henry Stolzman, 1945–2012

The senior partner of the venerable, two-generation New York firm Pasanella + Klein, Stolzman + Berg (now PKSB), Henry Kardon Stolzman died on August 8 at 66 after an extended bout with cancer. He spent his last months at the Orchard, a sprawling house in Millerton, New York, that he recently built with his wife, Alison. He is survived by his wife, his brother and sister, his sons Kardon and Daniel Stolzman, the women in their lives Sasha and Caroline, and a grandson Phoenix.

Henry Stolzman was born in Brooklyn, grew up in Yonkers, went to college at McGill University in Montreal, **continued on page 2**

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DESIGN DOWN THE VOLUME

A recent report in the *New York Times* confirmed what many of us know: New York restaurants are too loud. As residents and workers we live with a constant din of urban noise, but as the article stated, many of the places where we choose to spend our time and money, to gather and unwind, are actually damaging our hearing more than car horns and jack hammers. Of a random sampling of nearly 40 restaurants, bars, stores, and gyms, nearly one third exceeded healthy noise levels. Bars and restaurants were the worst offenders, some registering noise levels of up to 105 decibels, levels that cause headaches and hearing loss. (For comparison, a subway train pulling into a station registered at 84 decibels).

The report was alarming, but also pointed to a design problem—and a trend that has gone too far. The cause is obvious, and architects and designers are often the culprits. The much-imitated Keith McNally look of soaring spaces, tile walls and floors, zinc bars, and plenty of conviviality combine to create cacophonous noise levels that are both harmful and unpleasant. Designers often strive to create noisy spaces on the misguided assumption that loud bars and restaurants reflect happy customers, and that roaring rooms generate buzz and hype, not just ringing ears. On an aesthetic level, isn't great conversation—spoken at a civilized volume and actually understood by listeners—one of the essential ingredients of a memorable meal? On a more serious level, designers are contributing to a public health problem.

Many of these spaces actually violate labor laws, and their owners could face citations—if regulations were ever enforced. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration issued 14 violations for noise levels in New York last year, all for construction sites and factories. None were issued for bars and restaurants.

Designing for auditory comfort and safety should be a priority for architects and interior designers. Our collective sanity and long-term health, as well that of restaurant and bar workers, is at stake.

A Note of Thanks

On a brighter note, on behalf of everyone at AN, I'd like to extend my gratitude to Julie V. Iovine, who is stepping down after six years at the helm of the paper. She has been an extraordinary colleague, mentor, and friend to everyone here. Her intelligence, grace, and humor have marked every printed page and blog post. Thank you, Julie. **ALAN G. BRAKE**

HENRY STOLZMAN, 1945-2012 continued from front page and received his graduate degree in architecture from Columbia University in 1974.

He joined Giovanni Pasanella and Arvid Klein's highly regarded firm, known for housing and university buildings, in 1978. Six years later Wayne Berg joined the firm. It became known as Pasanella + Klein, Stolzman + Berg in 1992. Led by the two younger partners, the firm won numerous awards for modernist designs of public places, university buildings, and private residences, while postmodernism was still in fashion.

Stolzman, who was a fellow of both the American Institute of Architects and the Institute for Urban Design, designed schools, homes for art collectors and filmmakers, and three particularly charming boutique hotels in New York—the Shoreham, the Mansfield, and the tiny Franklin.

An active member of the West End Synagogue, for which he created a home in an old public library, preserving much of its atmosphere while adding facilities for prayer and meetings, Stolzman was particularly interested in synagogue design. With his son Daniel, he was the author of *Synagogue Architecture In America*, which was published by the Images Publishing Group in 2006.

He renovated the historic Park Avenue Synagogue, restored sacred space in two 19th-century townhouses for the Society for the Advancement of Judaism, designed a pristine new rooftop chapel and roof garden for Congregation Rodeph Sholom, and built additions to the Larchmont Temple in Westchester County and to Temple B'Nai Chaim in Georgetown, Connecticut. His firm also created a modernization plan for St. Michael's Church in New York and the Buddhist Retreat Center in Middletown, New York.

Delivering a eulogy at his funeral on August 10, Rabbi Leah Cohen of Temple B'Nai Chaim said, "My words pale in comparison to the reality of his creations. Those who have had the privilege of working with him need no words to describe who he was. My experience may be unique for our congregation, but I don't believe it was unique for Henry. As one devoted to turning a client's aspirations into concrete reality, I believe that nothing gave Henry a greater sense of professional pride than creating sacred space. When Henry built synagogues, he went beyond merely functionality, or even aesthetics. He labored to express something much deeper."

To me, Henry was a friend. He had something more than an unwavering commitment to his work. He had a commitment to humankind. He was a man of character whose personal, professional, and political behavior were all one thing.

Like many members of my generation, he spent the Vietnam War years doing alternative service—teaching mathematics at the Columbia Grammar School while studying architecture at Columbia at night. But he never completely got Vietnam out of his mind. One of the last trips he took with his wife Allie, after he was ill, was to Vietnam. Like many of us who were opposed to the war, 30 years later he was still concerned about what had happened there.

Henry's generosity—to his large extended family, his synagogue, and the larger community—was extraordinary. He even taught this tight-fisted Midwesterner to tip like a New Yorker.

JAYNE MERKEL, AN ARCHITECTURE CRITIC, CO-AUTHORED PASANELLA + KLEIN STOLZMAN + BERG (ROCKPORT PUBLISHERS, 2000).

BOLDFACE NAMES TRY TO SAVE GOLDBERG'S CLOVERLEAF

PRITZKERS FOR PRENTICE

Bertrand Goldberg's Old Prentice Women's Hospital has become a cause célèbre for architects and preservationists across Chicago and around the world, garnering the support of five more Pritzker laureates in late August amid mounting pressure for demolition.

Robert Venturi, Tadao Ando, Jacques Herzog, Pierre de Meuron and Eduardo Souto de Moura

added their names to a letter sent to Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel last month from more than 60 architects, including Frank Gehry, Jeanne Gang and several partners of SOM. Dan Coffey and Jack Hartray of Chicago, George Miller of New York City, Denise Scott Brown of Philadelphia, and Bjarke Ingels of Copenhagen also joined the chorus of designers calling on Chicago city officials to grant the iconic cloverleaf structure landmark status.

But despite the deluge of high-profile support, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks again omitted from its meeting agenda. Then, noting the recent flurry of media coverage, commission Chairman Rafael Leon announced at the top of Thursday's meeting that the commission

would address the issue before the end of its fall season.

Northwestern University, Prentice's owner, announced their intention to tear down the vacant hospital last year. Alderman Brendan Reilly helped secure a stay of execution for the building, galvanizing a preservation movement that has earned the support of the Chicago AIA, Landmarks Illinois and other groups.

Northwestern has touted the results of a survey it conducted that showed evidence for public support of the building's demolition. The Save Prentice coalition questioned the validity of those results, however, calling on Northwestern to release the full text of its survey.

CHRIS BENTLEY

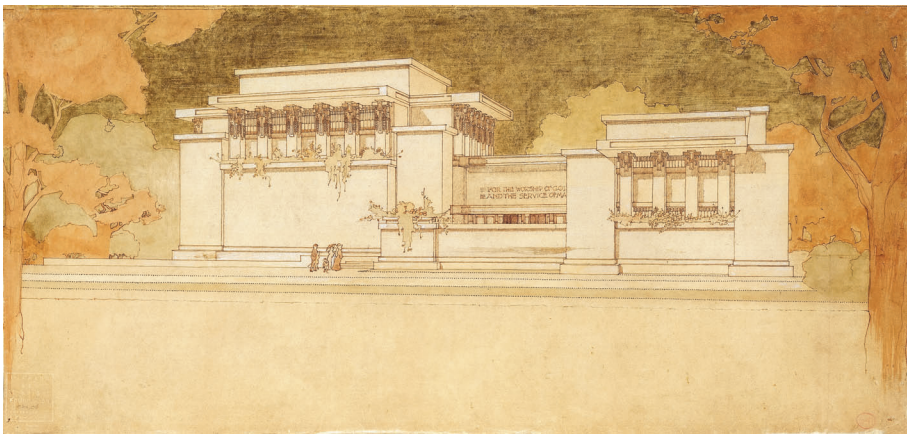
ARC DE JEGGINGS

You know low-rise skinny jeans are over when someone builds a monument to them. Oh wait, that's the **RMJM's** Gate of the East! Located in Suzhou, a city west of Shanghai, the building is six times taller than the Arch de Triomphe and intended to commemorate China's entrance into the global economic market. But as the skeletal structure began to be erected, some Suzhou citizens asked, "Um, doesn't that look like a pair of pants?" Indeed, the almost-pointed arch evokes a cross-section of a gothic cathedral, or, to the modern eye, a pair of really tight trousers. But these aren't just any pants. In a response published on Dezeen.com, RMJM pointed out the building's many "feats," including the highest swimming pool in China and the most use of steel per unit volume. "While some critics view the unfinished skeleton as a laughable pair of low-rise jeans, the gateway is a far cry from a joking matter," said RMJM. (Hey, quit smirking!)

MOODY RATING

Wyst (wyst.it), the social media app that allows users to tag locations in the city with an emoticon, has published a mood map of New York City. Wyst's tagline: "a new kind of message in a bottle." The app launched in August 2011, and now has a year's worth of data to analyze. It's predictable that the angriest nabe is the high-testosterone Financial District. More unexpected is Hasidic-hipster South Williamsburg's status as the flirtiest. Cheers, East Village, you're the drunkest. Roosevelt Island? The most surprised ("You can only drive here from Queens?" "There's a **Louis Kahn**-designed park?"). Poor Clinton Hill ranks as the absolute saddest—chin up, Pratt students! Cross the river and get some liquid courage with your NYU friends.

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COURTESY AVERY/MOMA/FLWF

WRIGHT AT HOME continued from front page 44,000 photographs, more than 40 large-scale models, manuscripts, and thousands of pages of correspondence. The drawings, photographs, and correspondence will be housed at Columbia, while MoMA will care for the models, architectural details, and mock-ups. The Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation will consult with the two institutions on developing the archive, and will retain the architect's art collection.

"At MoMA, Frank Lloyd Wright's work will be in conversation with great modern artists and architects such as Picasso, Mies van der Rohe, and Le Corbusier," said Barry Bergdoll, the Philip Johnson Chief Curator of Architecture and Design at MoMA, in a statement. "This collaboration provides opportunities to reposition Wright as a key figure in the larger development of modern art and architecture, after decades of scholarship that have often emphasized his lone genius and his unique Americanness. A new chapter in appreciating Wright is opened by this new setting for his legacy."

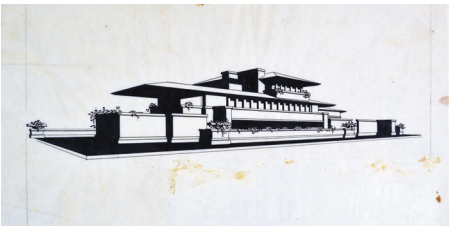
Many of the models in the archive were produced for a Wright retrospective held at MoMA in 1940. Through Avery, Wright's papers and drawings will be widely accessible to scholars, as well as available for curricular use at Columbia.

Architectural archives are famously unwieldy and MoMA has been reticent to acquire them. The museum owns the Mies van der Rohe archive, but typically only

Above: Unity Temple, Oak Park, IL, 1904;
Below: The Robie House, Chicago, 1908-10.

takes presentation drawings and high-quality models into its collection. "While Le Corbusier and Aalto's archives are held in separate foundations, the chance to have Mies van der Rohe's archive and Frank Lloyd Wright's both in New York and at MoMA was simply too fundamental not to consider," Bergdoll told *AN*.

"The collaboration with Avery gives an ideal combination of museum exhibition space and conservation labs and readers services in the nation's leading architectural library in a research university with a major school of architecture," according to Bergdoll. "When we were approached by the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation to make a proposal we immediately said we need to ally with a library to have the work be accessible to scholars." The partnership model could pave the way for more seminal interpretation—including visual display—of the complex process of making great architecture. **AGB**



COURTESY HWKN

> **MENSCIENCE**
329 Lafayette Street
Tel: 212-219-3525
Designers: HWKN

Located in highly trafficked Soho, the MenScience flagship store, designed by New York-based HWKN, elegantly fuses brand identity and product functionality through its materiality, careful detailing, and modular design.

Its gridded, blackened steel product display, juxtaposed with locally sourced, recycled barnwood plank flooring is both sophisticated and masculine, emphasizing the brand's identity while immersing its customers in a hallway of products. Defined by Marc Kushner, principal of HWKN, as a "wrapper" project, the space intensifies its unique dual storefront location between Lafayette and Mulberry Streets. "It is a perimeter scheme that treats the floor, walls, and ceilings with a similar material to create a tunnel of product—a MenScience experience—in a space that spans between two streets," he said.

One of the biggest challenges was translating the brand's established online identity into physical space. "We looked at the brand's color and packaging," says Kushner. "We wanted to capture as much of the brand's identity as we could while taking advantage of a unique urban site." Adaptability was another challenge, one met by using a repetitive, modular display system that allows for flexible configuration while inviting customers to test and explore MenScience products. While small, this store packs a big punch both visually and spatially. **GABRIEL FUENTES**

artek

"A chair is not just a seat, it is
the key to the whole interior."

Kiki Collection
Ilmari Tapiovaara, 1960



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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 19, 2012

The base of Gluck's tower maintains the street wall.



COURTESY PETER GLUCK AND PARTNERS

TOWERING ABOVE BEN continued from front page Gluck's presentation of 205 Race Street soured when new renderings revealed that an initial proposal by SHoP Architects, which was approved at a 100-foot height, had morphed into a 197-foot tower set back from Race Street. The group voted 11 to one to oppose the project.

Gluck said that the timing of the filing was coincidental, adding that the design phase of the project

began more than a year ago when political wrangling surrounding zoning legislation made the outcome of the code uncertain.

Gluck and the developer Jeffrey Brown decided to move forward.

"We knew what was going on,"

Gluck said. "We designed it not for the zoning strictures, but what

made sense urbanistically and what was doable from an economic standpoint."

Eva Gladstein, deputy executive director at the City Planning Commission, said that as the deadline neared some developers

submitted zoning applications under the old code because they

were more familiar with it, while others filed afterward because they

found the code favorable to their development. The area in question

has a 65-foot height limit under both codes, so a variance is required

under each. But a minimum requirement of 90 parking spaces under the old code was whittled down to 34 in Gluck's design. The new code requires 38, so Gluck's plan is roughly in line with the new rules.

By rolling the dice and moving forward with an eye toward development happening on the waterfront, an initial rejection by Licensing and Inspections (L&I) seemed inevitable, as did the rejection by a local preservation-oriented community group. The timing also allowed the developer to avoid a review by a newly created Civic Design Review board. Under the new code, Civic Design Review and registered community organizations only play advisory roles.

The appeal to the L&I decision will now go before the Zoning Board of Adjustment on September 18, where some in the community believe that Brown stands a good chance of getting the project passed. "Is our process devoid of political influence?" asked Joe Schiavo, the vice chair of OCCA's development committee. "Perhaps not yet."

Gluck would not comment on curtain wall materials or engineering while the building is in the middle of the permitting process. But he did say that the taller height was a shift in massing intended to respond to the neighborhood context, adding that the volume remains much the same. The initially

approved building was 100 feet high all the way around its perimeter. The architect said the new design creates a lower parapet at 56 feet along Race Street, before stepping back 14 feet to create the 197-foot rise. The setback would make way for a green roof and a two-story cutout into the tower along the Race Street side. The height is intended to offer clear views of the bridge while emphasizing the corridor leading to the recently completed Race Street Pier. The tower is designed to respond to the height of the bridge, though detractors point out that the new code addresses nearby building height and not the bridge.

A glass store front would run along Race and Second streets before giving way to service docks on Florist Street, which runs just under the bridge. In an area known for its narrow colonial streets, Gluck said that the bridge allows the Florist Street service docks to accommodate large trucks needed to service a supermarket. It's an amenity the architect said the area needs, along with the people to use it. "Old city desperately needs population and retail, the kind of things that make a city work," said Gluck. "Right now there's a very long derelict area and our project is meant to enhance the movement toward the pier."

TOM STOELKER

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A CALL TO CRITICAL ARMS continued from front page contributing editor, giving the glossy additional gravitas. Now the National Building Museum has added Goldberger to its illustrious roster of Vincent Scully Prize winners. The award carries a purse of \$40,000. “I don’t know that I’ll ever be on another list that includes Prince Charles and Jane Jacobs,” Goldberger told *AN*.

The first Scully award went to its namesake, Vincent Scully, professor emeritus of art history at Yale. In a statement, Goldberger recalled the influence Scully had on him at Yale: “In a very real way I owe my career to the lessons I learned from him, which is why, for me, there could be no higher honor than to receive the prize that carries his name.”

The Scully jury seems to have taken a shining to many a Yalie. Though awarded fourteen times—on occasion to multiple partner firms like Venturi Scott Brown Associates—sixteen individuals have taken home the prize. Eleven have some had some affiliation with the university. They’ve either gone there, taught there, or, in the case of the Aga Khan, given part of his award money to the institution. It’s a clubby little group with Goldberger himself having served on the Scully jury from 1999–2005.

The speech Goldberger plans to deliver at the museum on November 15 will no doubt stir the kind of applause that famously followed his mentor’s lectures at Yale. The address will hit on themes that many in the profession have been mulling over for the course of this tumultuous year in the architectural press: the state of architecture criticism, the changing role of mainstream media in a digital world, and the rise of citizen journalists.

“It’s a paradox about the great degree of interest in architecture and yet a diminishing amount of outlets,” Goldberger said, wondering out loud whether the buzz in social media is the equivalent of what is being lost in the general media. He added that it’s a complex issue when a mass of voices drown out the opinion of the specialist. “There is a profound value to expert guidance,” he said.

The very heart of his career is based on sharing architecture with a mass audience in an unpretentious manner, and Goldberger, an avid Tweeter, said he wouldn’t consider reversing course. “My whole life has been trying to communicate to a broader general audience—that’s the most important thing of all to me,” he said. “But I feel that things have gone too far—crowdsourcing doesn’t always bring you where you want to be.”

He paraphrased literary critic Daniel Mendelsohn’s belief that the critic’s first allegiance is to his subject and not his readers. “Democracy is a great thing but it doesn’t always lead to the best architectural decisions,” he said. “Committees can make things happen, but they can’t create works of art.” **TS**

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The Leader in Bathroom Innovation Expands its Global Projects Team in New York City.

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living square

capable of blending in seamlessly or becoming the bold statement in any space – offering technical and functional solutions. With a team now located in New York City, the expansion of LAUFEN’s global projects strategy allows the brand to further expand its reach from its headquarters in Switzerland to Singapore, London and now New York. With their resources and engineering know-how, LAUFEN has worked with some of the largest firms in the world on some of the most creative and forward-thinking projects to date. LAUFEN makes exceptional bathroom concepts come to life through the Swiss expression of architectural design.

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LAUFEN’s contemporary bathroom products adhere to the Swiss aesthetic of ‘whispering not shouting’. LAUFEN’s products are designed and engineered to complement the overall bathroom design; allowing the design to take center stage. Whispering however, does not mean lacking in individual integrity, high design and ingenuity. LAUFEN’s collections are the most technologically advanced on the market today.



living square

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palace

available in white, chalked oak, and anthracite oak. Collections have shelving that is also cuttable to fit with the vanities, and palace has integrated towel rails.

For any bathroom project that has its challenges – LAUFEN’s living square and palace offer the ‘best fit’ solutions.

Statement Pieces

Understanding that some spaces do call for a statement piece, LAUFEN has a myriad of solutions with its ‘designed’ collections. Working with renowned product designers Roberto + Ludovica Palomba, LAUFEN offers the most sought-after contemporary bath collection today: the Palomba Collection.



Palomba Collection

The Palomba’s are renowned for skillfully pushing the limits of ceramic design and infusing their products with an organic elegance born of their inspirations from the natural world.

The new collection builds on the design language that the Palomba’s describe as a “fingerprint of nature.” Their collections focus on developing what has become their signature – infusing ceramics with an organic sensibility. Their new collection takes that organic sensibility a step further, bridging the Palomba’s sense of wonder and appreciation for nature with a designer’s eye on functionality. Products in this new collection include freestanding washbasins, countertop washbasins, a freestanding bathtub and a complete collection of coordinating furniture.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 19, 2012



The latest design for the addition to Chelsea Market.

COURTESY STUDIOS ARCHITECTURE

PLANNING PASSES REVISED CHELSEA MARKET EXPANSION

Waiting for Quinn

In a unanimous vote on August 4, New York City Planning Commission approved Jamestown Properties' expansion plans at Chelsea Market with few modifications. The building was rezoned to be included in the Special West Chelsea District, thereby allowing developers to increase density in exchange for amenities for the High Line.

The latest designs by Studios Architecture set the massing of the Tenth Avenue tower back away from the park, which Planning Commissioner Amanda Burden had expressed concern about during a review session. Jamestown also agreed to eliminate a hotel component, provide park facilities, and allocate funds for affordable housing to be built in the Community Board 4 district. "While affordable housing bonuses are not normally associated with commercial buildings, there are special features of the West Chelsea district regulations

which make this possible," said Burden.

Nevertheless, several community groups remain concerned about additional traffic and congestion related to the High Line and the market's expansion. Friends of the High Line, however, supports the project in keeping with the public/private financing model currently driving the development and maintenance of parks in New York. "This is clearly a deal between the Friends, City Planning, and Jamestown," said Save Chelsea's David Holowka. He noted that the majority of the massing will gravitate toward the park rather than Ninth Avenue. "The amenities are cold comfort," concurred Andrew Berman of the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation. "The development will increase traffic and congestion to an area that's already busting at the seams."

The measure will now go before City Council and Speaker Christine Quinn, whose district includes the Chelsea Market. The expansion is considered by some to be a litmus test of where the mayoral candidate's loyalties lie, with the neighborhood opponents or the development community. **TS**

AT DEADLINE

ELEVENTH HOUR

The conflict between Governor Cuomo and Mayor Michael Bloomberg over cost responsibilities at the September 11 Museum was finally resolved on the eve of the eleventh anniversary. *The New York Times* reported that construction, which has been stalled since last fall, could resume immediately. Though the museum was slated to be open this month, officials are now projecting that it will be completed by the end of next year.

DREXEL EXTENDS

Drexel University unveiled a master plan for the next thirty years that makes NYU's expansion plans modest by comparison, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* reports. The Drexel master plan by Goody Clancy is double the size of NYU's expansion, but the Drexel project seems to have been received comparatively little opposition. The plan calls for a densely concentrated core along a Market Street spine, while an eastbound residential expansion toward the Schuylkill River could eventually bridge a desolate gap between West Philly and Center City.

CUNY SWAPS

A joint venture between City University of New York and Memorial Sloan-Kettering will allow the two institutions to build new medical facilities on Manhattan's Upper East Side. Perkins Eastman and Ennead are collaborating on the design. The city will sell a 66,000 square foot site on East 73 Street for \$215 million where Sloan Kettering will build a 750,000 square foot cancer care facility. CUNY Hunter's nursing and physical therapy programs will close down their aging campus next door to Bellevue Hospital and take up residence in new 336,000 square foot building also on the East Side site. The old Hunter site will revert to the city, which will use part of the site for a new sanitation garage and a portion for residential development.

MAS, SOM, WXY, AND FOSTER TOO

The Municipal Arts Society is celebrating Grand Central's upcoming centennial by holding a design challenge to reimagine the grand dame for the next 100 years. Foster & Partners, SOM, and WXY have each been invited to revamp public spaces inside and outside the terminal. More DOT pedestrian plazas anyone? The results of will be shown at the society's third annual Summit for New York City on October 18.

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WTC SITE BELOW LIBERTY STREET TAKES SHAPE

SECURED BELOW LIBERTY

As the 11th anniversary of the September 11 attacks passed, another major design element has quietly moved forward at the World Trade Center site: the design of the St. Nicolas Greek Orthodox Church and an above grade park that will mask the Vehicle Security Center (VSC) at the southernmost edge of the site.

Most World Trade Center maps don't include the VSC or the Greek Orthodox Church, which will sit south of Liberty Street. It was less than a year ago that the Governor Andrew Cuomo brokered an agreement that allowed the church to return to the site near its former home on Cedar Street. A decade-long battle with the Port had kept its fate in the courts.

Now, the steel latticework of the VSC's truck ramp is clearly visible from nearby towers. In addition to being the entrance and exit for deliveries, the center of the doughnut shaped structure will also support the 60 by 60 foot church sanctuary. Steve Plate, the Port's director of construction, said work on the park will begin this time next year. AECOM is designing an open

space that will swell approximately 30 feet above the Liberty Street entrance to the VSC, creating a man-made hill on the south side of the World Trade Center site. State of the art security, engineered by Liberty Security Partners, will allow all vehicles to be x-rayed on their way into the site.

The church sanctuary will rise another 56 feet above Liberty Street, a full 78 feet above the sidewalk. Church architect Nicholas P. Koutsomitis said that the Port stipulated that the church not rise above the September 11 Memorial Museum's roof plane. An additional emergency exit will drop Cedar Street below grade and into the VSC complex.

Fritz Koenig's *Sphere for Plaza Fountain*, which sustained substantial damage on 9/11 and now sits in Battery Park, appears destined for the VSC site as well. It appears prominently in the renderings, and Koutsomitis confirmed that the sculpture will be included in the new park. **TS**

Below: Fritz Koenig's *Sphere* will return to the site.



COURTESY PORT AUTHORITY OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

LAWN AND ORDER



Colleges today are rethinking not only the structure of their curriculum, but also that of their classrooms. With **John Jay College of Criminal Justice** outgrowing its widely scattered facilities, school officials asked **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill** to design a new vertical campus consolidating all social and academic functions, including a **65,000-square-foot roof terrace**, within a single city block. Using steel girders to span a network of Amtrak tunnels running beneath the prominent Midtown site made the design possible. Now, John Jay students are better able to collaborate across disciplines and enhance their legal research—proving it's easy to build a case for choosing structural steel.

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Architect: Skidmore, Owings & Merrill
Structural Engineer: Leslie E. Robertson Associates
Photograph: SOM | © Eduard Hueber

1



2



6



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4

COURTESY RESPECTIVE MANUFACTURERS

TURN UP THE HEAT

The latest kitchen cooktops are strong, streamlined, stand-alone units built to last. **By Perrin Drumm**

1 UNIQUE EGGERSMANN

Using the same slate for the cabinet fronts, plinth, channel, worktop, and sink is what gives Unique its seamless look. Units come in 18 different stone finishes as well as Corian, and can be made in varying lengths and customized with cabinets, panels, pull-outs, and seating areas. eggersmannusa.com

2 ANIMA CABINET BINOVA

The integrated, motorized, double-sided cabinet can be raised for access to prep tools and cookware and lowered for a clutter-free kitchen and larger workspace. It's large enough to house tableware and utensils, as well as TV monitors, DVD readers, and even a mobile bar. binova.it/eng

3 K20 BOFFI

The rigorous aesthetic of the k20 introduces new materials (Corian, melamine, aluminum, and steel) into the Norbert Wangen collection, as well as integrated lighting and organizers, a flush-fit stovetop and a wrap-around finish for a more streamlined unit. boffi.com

4 HEART OF GOLD STEININGER

A new design concept is based on four modules available in stone, concrete, and ceramic that allow buyers to create their own perfect kitchen, customizing the dimensions of their workspace, storage, washing, and food prep areas. Interior lit drawers with magnetic dividers are lined with its namesake anodized golden aluminum. steininger-designers.at

5 DC10 ROSSANA

Vincenzo De Cotiis chose burnished brass for its durability as well as its scientific connotations, transforming the kitchen into a serious cooking lab, albeit a very refined one. Brass complements wood and stone finishings, doors slide or pop open elegantly with a soft click. rossana.com

6 LACUCINA ALESSI VALCUCINE

Minimalist but not reductive, Wiel Arets' polished, joint-free cook station was designed specifically for the contract market. Made in Corian Glacier White with rounded edges and corners, LaCucinaAlessi comes in three versions: single island, two-column island, and a wall unit, all of which are customizable. valcucine.com

Morris Adjmi and
Aldo Andreoli;
Below: Nancy Rogo
Trainer and Daniel
McCoubrey



KARIN KOHLBERG

WHEN FIRMS EVOLVE, WHAT'S IN A NAME?

ABOUT FACE

Summer is the preferred molting season for architects, the time of year when they slip off of old identities and test out new ones. In July, the venerable Philadelphia firm of Venturi Scott Brown and Associates officially became VSBA, a company owned not by the authors of *Learning from Las Vegas* but by one of their protégés, VSBA principal Daniel McCoubrey. "Maintaining some identity with the prior firm was very important to us, so it's an evolution not a revolution," said McCoubrey.

About the same time New York-based Morris Adjmi Architects announced that his partnership with architect Aldo Andreoli, an affiliation that for the last two years has operated as an office (Adjmi + Andreoli) within Adjmi's Manhattan office, was ready to be pushed out of the nest. In September, Adjmi + Andreoli will move into its own studio in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. "I like the idea of not just having a solo career, but being able to collaborate a little bit, partner a bit," said Adjmi.

This summer's shifts are gentle progressions compared to the unexpected mash-ups and radical re-namings of recent years. In June of 2011, Gwathmey Siegel, the renowned New York firm known for its design work, announced a merger with Gene Kaufman Architects, a firm best known for its copious commercial buildings in New York City. After Charles Gwathmey passed away in 2009, his long-time partner Bob Siegel was open to joining forces with another entity. Enter Gene Kaufman, who bought the firm outright and added his own name to the shingle, but also made a point of retaining Gwathmey's. The result is GSKA, Gwathmey Siegel Kaufman Architects. "There are two important things with a name change—one is to show what's new, and two is to show what's the same. We wanted to show that a great deal of the firm is the same," said Kaufman.

The firm formerly known as Polshek Partnership had a different approach. In June 2010, the New York office founded by James Polshek in 1963 became Ennead, the ancient Greek word for "nine," reflecting that the firm was in fact being led by nine

partners, not Polshek. (Today Ennead has eleven partners.) "The name change reflected the transition from the kind of maestro, sole-proprietor brand to the way the firm actually works," said Ennead partner Todd Schliemann, who noted that the firm took several years to plan the renaming, keeping it a close secret up until the time of the announcement. "In the end, it's all about the work we do," said Schliemann. "It's just a name. The people are the same, the work is the same and getting better."

Communications strategist Jacqueline Pezzillo, who worked at Davis Brody Bond during a time when the firm morphed to Davis Brody Bond Aedas and back again, has studied the role a name plays in an architecture firm's reputation. "The research shows that the large majority of firms felt that reputation was much more dependent on the portfolio of work versus the name," said Pezzillo, who surveyed over 80 AIA firms on the subject. Many younger firms seem to have taken this assumption to heart, coming up with quirky names destined to raise the hackles of copyeditors, from 5468796 architecture to what!worx design collaborative.

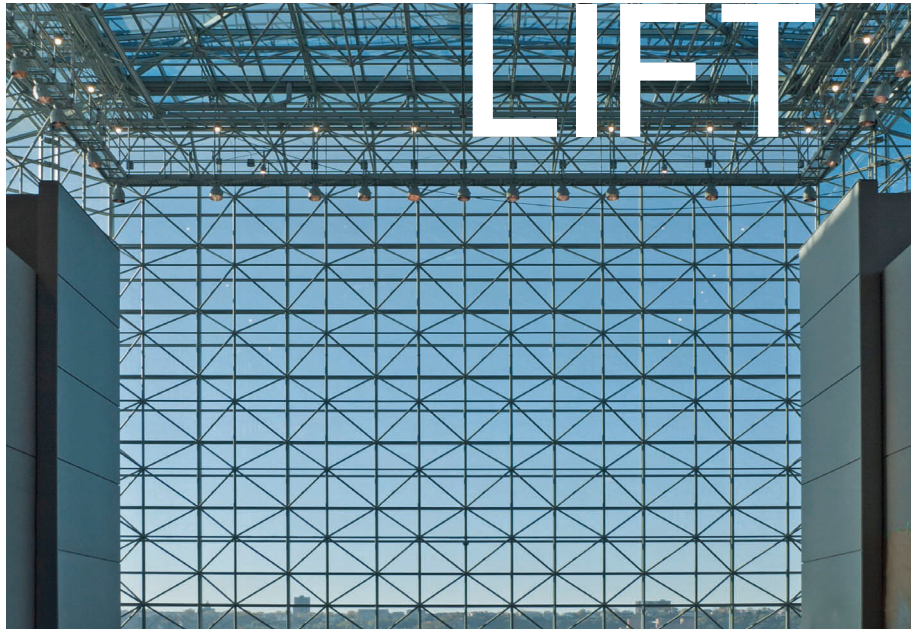
Even if portfolio trumps all, the name of the office seems to have the most psychological impact for firm leadership working in the shadow of their predecessors. "Dan and I have been leading projects for over ten years, so the name on the door had become a bit of misnomer," said Nancy Rogo Trainer, VSBA's other principal. "The initials may have less meaning, but it's incumbent upon us to represent the value ingrained in them and new ways of taking that forward."

MOLLY HEINTZ



COURTESY VSBA

SPACE LIFT



Since its construction in 1982, the **Jacob K. Javits Center** has been one of the world's leading examples of space-frame design. But the **I.M. Pei & Partners**-designed exhibit space needed updating to put its best face forward for the 3.5 million visitors it receives each year. So owners engaged **Epstein Global** and **FXFowle Architects**, who developed the recladding program that is dramatically increasing the building's transparency and energy efficiency. Targeting LEED Silver with a glazing system that will enable the building to exceed energy code requirements by 25 percent, the new face of Javits proves that being old doesn't have to mean retiring.

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Architect: Epstein Global, FXFowle Architects
Photographer: Enclos

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 19, 2012



NEW MUSEUM IN VENICE CELEBRATES THE CITY'S FAMED GLASS IN A SELLDORF-DESIGNED SETTING

GLASS ACT

Along with wowing tourists, making glass is a major industry in Venice. But only now is there an official glass museum to celebrate and document the history of innovative glass design.

Located on the island of San Giorgio, across the water from San Marco Square, the new Rooms for Glass designed by New York-based Annabelle Selldorf, with Venetian

architects Fabrizio Cattaruzza and Francesco Millosevich, opened during the architecture biennale in late August with an exhibition dedicated to the Venini glassworks and its director, architect Carlo Scarpa, a trailblazer in modern glass.

The 7,000-square-foot exhibition space, in a former military boarding school, redeploys classrooms into galleries with considerable finesse adding several ample vitrines in each room, some 65 feet of open storage for the collection, all in finely detailed



blackened-steel display cases by local artisans that complement by contrast the white plaster walls. The showpieces currently on display—remarkable for their mastery of traditional techniques married to a modern sensibility—were made by Scarpa between 1932 and 1947 when he was at the Venini. Working drawings and sketches thought to have been destroyed are also on display giving insight into the architect's creative process. Holding their own—in comparison to Scarpa—are 19 hanging lamps of milky engraved Murano glass by Paris-born, Venice-based artist Alessandro Diaz de Santillana that elegantly define the circulation paths without decorating them. **JULIE V. IOVINE**

Carlo Scarpa: Venini 1932–1947
Island of San Giorgio Maggiore, Italy
Through November 29



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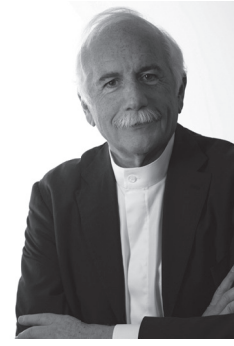
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Above: FAT
Villa Rotunda Redux, 2012
Below: Zaha Hadid Architects
Arum, 2012

William Menking surveys the 2012 Venice Architecture Biennale, directed by the British architect David Chipperfield.

SEEKING COMMON GROUND



FRANCESCO GALLI/COURTESY: LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA

The director of this year's Venice Architecture Biennale, David Chipperfield, claims visitors are here to celebrate "shared ideas over individual authorship" and a "rich culture of difference rather than a selection of edited and promoted positions." But Chipperfield has organized the exhibition in a nebulous and somewhat circuitous manner by not directly commissioning architects to install their own work. Instead, he has asked a "limited group of architects to develop ideas that might lead to further invitations." It seems that he hopes that by asking this limited group they in turn, rather than himself, will introduce fresh and diverse voices into the biennale which are not normally part of the architecture or exhibition circuit.

These invitees were asked to "propose a project along with a dialogue that reacted to the team and showed architecture in its context of influence and affinity, history and language, city and culture." It's not an altogether uninteresting curatorial strategy given the diversity of today's internationalized architectural culture and several in this group of invitees do seem to have taken Chipperfield at his word seeking historical or craft-minded collaborators rather than colleagues. One example is the relatively unknown Indian architect Anupama Kundoo, who is recreating her own "wall house" with Indian craftsmen, students from Australia, and craftspeople from Venice who have been working on the installation for over a month. Another example is Zaha Hadid who suggests a constructive conversation with great modernist engineers of the past such as Frei Otto and the London-based group Fat, which focused on the Villa Rotunda, the most imitated building in the world, to both reflect on their own practice's interests in copying and copyright and on the universality of the building itself.

Another invitee, the American historian Kenneth Frampton, has brought along his five North American architects—subjects of a book published on the occasion of his 80th birthday—all of whom are exemplary practitioners of design but not necessarily ones who "emphasize shared ideas over individual authorship," as Frampton asserts. But it has to be said that when looking at the official list of entries there are many geographical



FRANCESCO GALLI/COURTESY: LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA

Top: Anupama Kundoo
Feel the Ground. Wall House: One to One, 2012

Above: Urban-Think Tank
(Alfredo Brillembourg, Hubert Klumpner),
Justin McGuirk and Iwan Baan
Torre David/Gran Horizonte, 2012

and national gaps in the selection. Out of the 58 listed in the official press release, Chipperfield's friends include: 15 from the United Kingdom (no surprise there); seven groups from the United States; and, perhaps in a nod to Chipperfield's minimalist roots, 9 architects from tiny Switzerland. There is one architect from Africa (Noero Wolff Architects) and none from China or France.

Common Ground is in fact primarily a reaction to the last biennale in 2010, which focused on immediate, sensory environmental experience rather than material construction and processes in architecture. These concepts are perfectly exemplified by Herzog & De Meuron. Their installation uses the controversial Elbe Philharmonic Hall in Hamburg to highlight the problematic relationship between media and architecture.

Commissions were made to fill obvious gaps, such as a video on Renzo Piano Building Workshop's Shard and its presence as the tallest tower in London, and a look at the participatory process driving the transformation of the Berlin cold war-era airport, Tempelhof. But do the majority of the invited participants truly engage in new and meaningful ways with the sub-groups they have brought in or do they really show off their own talents?

The exhibits sometime end up being a dialogue only in the sense that they have multiple groups showing off personal strategies and tendencies, like Norman Foster's wraparound video installation. Albeit a collaboration, but one that focuses on Foster himself. All in all, Chipperfield is an unusual choice to curate this premier world exhibition. From Vittorio Gregotti back in 1975 to Paolo Portoghesi, Hans Hollein, and Aaron Betsky, directors have simultaneously engaged in academic writing and curating in addition to practice. Chipperfield, while being one of the most important architects of his generation, has not been thought of as a strident voice like Peter Eisenman or Peter Cook, neither raising his voice for or against any particular tendency in contemporary architectural discourse beyond the played-out minimalism of the 1980s. Like the 2010 director Kazuyo Sejima, he is primarily a practitioner, not a professional architect engaged simultaneously as a critic (Gregotti), or historian (Portoghesi), or even artist (Hollein), all of whom seem to have gained some experience as curators contributing to their role as director.

Chipperfield's architecture—the iconic River & Rowing Museum on the Thames, the America's Cup Building in Valencia, Spain, and the Neues Museum in Berlin—are important projects that prove he is one of the most accomplished exponents of British modernist design working today. With the exception of the Pritzker Prize, he has won nearly every important architecture award, including the RIBA Gold Medal in 2011, and he has been knighted by Queen Elizabeth. It is true that he co-founded London's 9H Gallery along with Wilfried Wang and Richard Burdett, but that was in 1985 and apart from surveys of his own work, he has not been responsible for any theoretical exhibitions or texts.

The past director/curators of the biennale have always started with a notion or a single concept and with a title such as *Presence of the Past* (Portoghesi) or *The Architect as Seismograph* (Hollein) or *Metamorph* (Kurt Forster). It's not that the theme "common ground" is not a good one inasmuch as it seems to suggest a critique of the dreary "star" architect phenomena or that it hints at bottom-up participatory planning as the driver of design. But somewhere between the sophistication of new technologies as form generators, the evolution of technological and specialized consultancies, and the desire of users to be part of the design process, a new paradigm is emerging as to how the common ground will settle into practice.

One hopes Chipperfield's project will, as promised, "initiate dialogues" that make what the theme really means clearer. Chipperfield's biennale comes back to the art of building itself and this is evident all through the Arsenale (where in fact the expansive volume of the space has been chopped up a little too much by sheetrock dividers). There are some surprises that you would not have expected from Chipperfield, including a loud and colorful pop-up bar by Urban-Think Tank, a recreation of the never finished Torre David/Gran Horizonte, a skyscraper inhabited by 750 families in Caracas. Featuring amazing photography by Iwan Baan, this festive space is the informal meeting point of this biennale—a shared space for people, architecture, and culture.

Julie V. Iovine tours the exhibition with David Chipperfield, conversing about his ideas on contemporary architecture culture.

THE THINKING BEHIND THE BIENNALE

How does the global economic crisis connect with the theme of *Common Ground*?

I don't think it's in a direct way but I certainly wanted a theme that had some relevance to this moment. It's not a crisis biennale. I don't think an exhibition about architecture is agile enough to make precise statements. Clearly the whole theme of common ground was a provocation to the profession to think harder about what we share intellectually and physically in terms of our inspirations, our concerns, and predicaments. The reason I chose this theme is that there is a societal

mood shift right now after a period of excessive growth and emphasis on the individual and on the spectacular.

Asking architects to invite other participants resulted in some gaps, how do you account for the absences?

I wanted to avoid the idea that the biennale is primarily about a list. The list becomes the defining thing. I wanted to escape that, but, of course, you can't. Whoever you invite is going to exclude someone else. The invitation does mean something.



INGRID VON KRUSE



tion—and so is architecture culture today. Clearly, China is a huge issue. My concern was spreading ourselves too thin.

Rem Koolhaas has complained that architects are too often pitted against each other and that is damaging to the profession.

Obviously that's what the whole show is about. When some of us sit around in bars after some competition, even if we don't like each other's work, after a few whiskeys you find you all have a lot of similar interests. If we can do that there why can't we do it professionally? I have so much respect for the talent of architects that I wanted to create a tent where they could show architecture instead of themselves. The free market has confused architects' ability to confess to shared ideas. That has contributed to the lack of commonality. I wanted to take the pressure off and say you are all great architects, we know that. Don't impress me with computer renderings of your latest tower. Instead, explain to us where your ideas come from, how you do what you do, and how you contribute to our common understanding of architecture culture.

What was preparing the biennale like?

I resented not having enough time to see more people. The pressure of time was stressful. It was a little overrun by logistical issues and conversations were always contaminated by trying to balance budgets and timelines. Asking people to ask people didn't work that well. It worked nicely that I went to 20 architects and that brought in 50 exhibitors, but then we started having to plug in the holes. If you are trying to talk about architecture culture now, you have to dig deeper than just who's hot now. The biennale is not an "Architecture's Got Talent" show.

Many projects invoke the past in ways that suggest postmodernism. Is that intentional?

Yes. Postmodernism hit when I was at the Architectural Association. It produced the worst architecture but it triggered an important shift in how we think about modernism so we owe it a huge debt. The biennale at that time really captured that pivotal moment. That biennale was my model. I also want to identify this moment of change as we reconsider the selfishness of the past 20 years.

What worries you most about architecture today?

I am frightened about architecture that is only about formalism. Architecture has to have meaning, not just novelty. The biggest ambition can't be just to be different. When we only talk about what architecture looks like, its color or what's in the lobby, we are just becoming decorators. We have lost confidence in our ability to really do things. The conversation has become too introverted. How come there is such a disconnect between what architects think they are doing and how they wish to serve society and how they really serve society? All good architects think they are making a contribution to society—Why does society think architects are just a bunch of profiteering egotistical joyriders? We want the same things. That's what common ground is about.



FRANCESCO GALLI/COURTESY: LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA

Opposite page: Chipperfield in the Arsenale;

This page, top: Herzog & de Meuron
Elbphilharmonie—The construction site as a common ground of diverging interests, 2012;

Above: Grafton Architects, Paulo Mendes da Rocha
Common Ground, 2012

Common ground is the fragile moment where people from diverse and opposite positions agree that they share some things. It's very easy to have common ground if you choose everyone from the same drawer. I wanted to choose from different drawers. If you can put Zaha Hadid and postmodernist Hans Kollhoff in the same space and get people comparing their thoughts, that's interesting.

How broad can the definition of architecture become and still be architecture?

This is an exhibition of architecture. It is not sociology or urban politics. I am interested in the physical stuff of architecture. Making architecture in South America is very different than making architecture in Europe but that is not an excuse to act as if they are irrelevant to each other.

The fastest changes in global architecture are happening in places like Africa and China, and yet they do not have a big presence here. Why not?

In the time we had it was very difficult to establish connections in those places. For me, while it is true that architects are completely dependent on the societies they work in, I still wanted to stay close to the materiality of architecture. I needed to use practitioners to talk about that. If I was doing a more researched and academic review of architecture tendencies, it would have been fascinating to see, for instance, how colonial architecture in North Africa influenced another generation. But how many issues can you take on? We did try to deal with an informal approach to architecture through groups like Urban-Think Tank who looked at an office building in Caracas full of squatters. It puts on the table another view of what architecture does. I am working on themes rather than a United Nations approach to individual projects. It's clear this is a Eurocentric exhibi-

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LECTURES

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Skurman Architects**

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Library at the General Society
20 West 44th St.
classicist.org/programs

**Another Language of
Diplomacy: Design
Excellence and the U.S.
Department of State**

7:00 p.m.
The Cooper Union
Great Hall
7 East Seventh St.
archleague.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

**Jack Lenor Larsen:
40 Years**

New York School of
Interior Design Gallery
161 East 69th St.
nysid.edu

EVENT

**Modern Conversations:
Caroline Rob Zaleski:
Long Island Modernism
1930-1980**

Knoll New York Showroom
7:30 p.m.
76 Ninth Avenue
West 15th St.
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THURSDAY 20
LECTURE

**Diana Balmori and
Joel Sanders:
Between Landscape
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6:30 p.m.
Paul Rudolph Hall
180 York St., New Haven, CT
yale.edu

EVENTS

**Microsol Resources Presents:
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8:00 a.m.
Racquet Club of Philadelphia
215 South 16th St.
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microsolresources.com

**Book Talk—
Law for Architects:
What You Need to Know**

6:00 p.m.
The Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
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SATURDAY 22
EVENT

ENYA Future Now Summit

9:00 a.m.
Center For Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
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WITH THE KIDS

**Family Program:
From Fabric to Fashion**

10:30 a.m.
The Skyscraper Museum
39 Battery Pl.
skyscraper.org

FRIDAY 21
EVENT

**Grasshopper Webinar:
Introduction to
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1:30 p.m.
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MONDAY 24
TOUR

**The Barnes Foundation:
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3:00 p.m.
The Barnes Foundation
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aiaphilidelphia.org

WEDNESDAY 26
LECTURE

**Public Art Fund Talks
at The New School—
Between Art and
Architecture:
Oscar Tuazon**

6:30 p.m.
Tishman Auditorium
66 West 12th St.
newschool.edu

THURSDAY 27
LECTURE

**American Splendor:
The Residential
Architecture of
Horace Trumbauer**

6:30 p.m.
Library at the General Society
20 West 44th St.
classicist.org/programs

EVENTS

**Urban Waterfronts 2012: The
Once and Future Waterfront**

The Waterfront Center
3844 Beecher St. NW
Washington, D.C.
waterfrontcenter.org

**Use of BIM in Historic or
Existing Buildings**

6:00 p.m.
The Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Pl.
aiany.org

SATURDAY 29
EVENT

**Data Lab: Parametric Design
+ Data Structures with
Grasshopper Workshop**

10:10 a.m.
Studio Mode 1 modelab
1205 Manhattan Ave.
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OCTOBER

MONDAY 1
EVENT

**The Architecture of
Fulton Center**

12:30 p.m.
New York Transit Museum
2 Broadway
mta.info/mta/museum

TUESDAY 2
EXHIBITION OPENING

**Massimo Scolari:
The Representation of
Architecture, 1967-2012**

6:30 p.m.
The Cooper Union
7 East Seventh St.
cooper.edu



COURTESY MOMA

9 + 1 WAYS OF BEING POLITICAL

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In the early part of the last century, political engagement and social uplift were central goals of modern architecture and design. By midcentury those ideals were largely lost, as modern architecture became associated with the very power structures avant-gardists had long critiqued. A new exhibition at MoMA, *9 + 1 Ways of Being Political*, drawn from the Museum's current collection, examines the neo-avant-garde of the 1960s and 1970s (such as Jason Crum's *Project for a Painted Wall*, 1969, above), which sought to revive progressive practice, as well as contemporary examples that continue that project today.

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THE LONG VIEW

*Oblique Drawing:
A History of Anti-Perspective*
Massimo Scolari
MIT Press, \$39.95

While the study of artificial and natural perspective has yielded a huge literature, its inverse has received only sporadic attention. Massimo Scolari's *Oblique Perspective: A History of Anti-Perspective* intends to shift the balance by redirecting our attention to non-(or anti)-perspective. As architect, scholar, and artist, Scolari is eminently qualified for the job.

Its wealth of historical material notwithstanding, Scolari's volume doesn't qualify as a true history, nor does it offer an alternative to traditional methodologies in the field, despite its avoidance of the standard chronological structure. In fact the fragile framework imposed by chapter divisions proves unable to contain the flow of text that meanders through time and place, turning back upon itself as it wanders through Assyria, Egypt, China, etc. Scolari dawdles in tangential discussions, leaping in what seems random order from one example to the next. While each episode is engaging, one finds no overarching

principle or cohesive structure with which to connect the tales. As a result, his "story" overwhelms when it should instruct, perplexes when it should illuminate. The book is an extravaganza of digression.

In fact, this is not an entirely new topic. Yves-Alain Bois opened the conversation with his excellent article, "Metamorphosis of Axonometry," some 30 years ago. Unlike Scolari he restricted his discussion to the rebirth of axonometry in the 20th century in the work and writings of such avant-garde artists as Van Doesberg, Malevich, and Lissitzky. He found the origins of axonometry in perspectival treatises and scientific, cartographic, machine, and military illustrations. He then proceeded to suggest the relevance of these early applications to 20th-century architectural practice. He spotted the difficulty Scolari himself faces in attempting a comprehensive survey, arguing that: "There are several different 'ideologies' of axonometry. It has been used in many different, often

contradictory ways: Jesuit strategists of the 18th century used it quite differently than Lissitzky, Albers, and painters of the Japanese Renaissance, or Russian constructivist architects." Scolari may have seen the problem but doesn't resolve it.

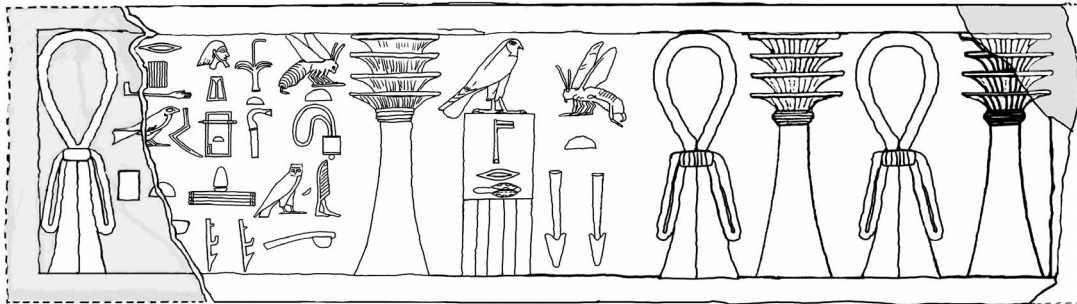
Other troubling issues plague Scolari's book. *Oblique Drawing* promises to be a scholarly work with its encyclopedic text and copious notes. But the reader has to wade through two dense chapters before chancing on Scolari's definition of his subject tucked away in Footnote 88 in Chapter 3. This essential information surely belongs in the main body of text, and his lengthy excursions into different cultures would be better slipped into footnotes or even a separate appendix. His many remarkable insights disappear in the proliferation of information and the book fails to be user-friendly for those accustomed to the ease of

internet research.

Understanding images in their own time frame remains a complicated task. Scolari struggles to tease the original meaning out of the drawings by providing a wealth of apposite documents to guide our interpretation of the fascinating little black and white illustrations that pepper the text and notes. As an artist and scholar he is remarkably well suited to a purely visual analysis informed by his wide knowledge. While we do learn much from his careful looking when it is offered, he frequently falls back on the treatise as the sole reliable source for deciphering meaning. As the late art critic and philosopher Leo Steinberg explains in his essay "The Mute Image and the Meddling Text," such dependence solely on textual interpretation may prove misleading and often produce disturbing inaccuracies. Artists and architects tend to break rules or reinvent them as they work.

Inscription from a statue of King Djoser, Third Dynasty of Egypt by Massimo Scolari.

Further along in the book Scolari examines some non-Western "proto-axonometric" images. Though he dedicates some notable pages to a discussion of Egyptian visual culture, he doesn't indicate how his exploration diverges from or expands upon the definitive earlier work by the distinguished scholar Heinrich Schafer whom he does cite. More significantly, he neglects Emma Brunner-Traut's epilogue that explains Schafer's notion of "aspective" (her term), or what Schafer believed to be the guiding principle in Egyptian representation. Similarly, Scolari revisits much of the same material that first appeared in Samuel Edgerton's chapter on Jesuits in the East in *The Heritage of Giotto's Geometry* without contributing new insights into the way misreading may alter our



COURTESY AMMO BOOKS
alexander girard art

FABRIC OF LIFE

Alexander Girard
Todd Oldham and Kiera Coffee
Ammo Books, \$200

Despite what the mainstream media would have you believe, *Mad Men* is not responsible for today's fervid embrace of mid-20th-century design. It's more emblematic of a pattern in public taste since World War II: underappreciated trends rediscovered four to six decades hence. Consider the love for Victoriana in the 1950s, art nouveau in the 1960s, arts and crafts in the 1970s, and deco and moderne in the 1980s. Can a new rage for Memphis and PoMo be far behind?

As such, we shouldn't be surprised that Alexander Girard is having sort of a moment. Late in 2011, Ammo Books released a 672-page tome about him, compiled by the fashion/interior/product designer Todd Oldham with design writer Kiera Coffee. At NeoCon this year, concurrent with reintroducing an archival collection of his textile designs, Herman Miller mounted *An Uncommon Vision*, an excellent exhibition of his work that will remain at Merchandise Mart until spring.

As director of Herman Miller's Textile Division from 1952 to 1973,

Girard worked with George Nelson and the Eameses to create what became the company's well-defined aesthetic. But Oldham and Coffee's *Alexander Girard* is less a scholarly analysis of Girard's career than a visual compendium of all things Sandro (his American parents raised him primarily in Italy), including designs for interiors, exhibits, textiles, tabletop items, furniture, and graphics, as well as his extensive personal collections of art and objects.

The book doesn't offer an enormous amount of interpretative material, which is acceptable because it does offer such a dense array of color-splashed images illustrating the vast range of Girard's talents that it compels readers to draw their own conclusions about his influence on design, both then and now.

Dozens of pages full of his folk art holdings—figurines, textile pieces, tableware, and other objects—clearly demonstrate a commonality with the quirky toys and games that were such an important part of Ray and Charles Eames' oeuvre. And while

continued on page 19

interpretation of illusionism.

Scolari initiates a gripping exploration of some syncretic manifestations of oblique perspective. Most studies on the subject occur in monographs on specific monuments such as the relief spandrels that once decorated the facade on the temple of Amavarati in India or the Theodosian Obelisk base in Istanbul. These works reveal the complex way remnants of Greco-Roman perspective systems combine with local forms to generate a new visual language in which traces of older systems meld with newer ones for the expressive needs of an evolving visual culture. Scolari's brief discussion of syncretism serves to identify the need for a more profound investigation of this complex subject—one that might include such literary sources as Orhan Pamuk's historical murder mystery *My Name is Red*. (The novel hinges on the exposure of the betrayal of Turkish painters who secretly learned the perspective technique of the "infidel Frankish masters." The tale reveals the allure of Western perspective for the miniaturists despite its static, monocular system.) Scolari might have touched on the deeper issues behind the way Western perspective challenges Eastern beliefs that impel

their mode of representing space.

Yet, despite its weaknesses this enormous compendium, a result of his wide-ranging teaching and the conclusion of a long personal involvement, does provide an excellent resource for artists, architects, and historians. And, finally, what *Oblique Perspective* does achieve is to underscore the need for a more comprehensive study, or perhaps even many studies.

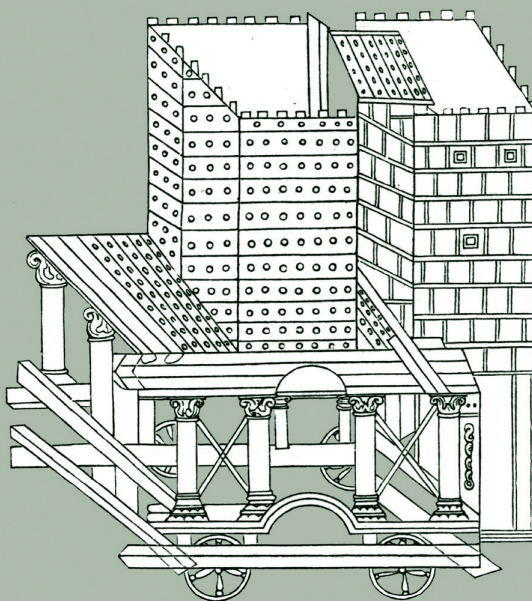
But the book's greatest contribution is the way it enhances our understanding and appreciation of Scolari's exquisite drawings, recently shown at Yale University School of Architecture (*Massimo Scolari: The Representation of Architecture, 1967–2012*). Here, Scolari provides a full-page reproduction of Joseph Futenbach the Elder's *Mannhafter Kunstspiegel* done in 1642. One quickly detects how this obscure work shares a powerful affinity with the way Scolari's magical buildings inhabit space. As we follow his choice of illustrations we begin to grasp the relevance or even urgency of this subject for his own work. We are indeed grateful for the chance to enrich our comprehension of the way his unique vision has evolved and the importance of its place in the history of representation.

NANCY GOLDRING IS AN ARTIST AND WRITER BASED IN NEW YORK.

Writing Architecture series

OBLIQUE DRAWING

A HISTORY OF ANTI-PERSPECTIVE



MASSIMO SCOLARI

introduction by
JAMES S. ACKERMAN

FABRIC OF LIFE continued from page 18

his space-age molded plastic furniture designs for Braniff and their eye-popping upholsteries may have been too edgy to make their way into your average American home, they certainly seem to have captured the fancy of Hollywood art directors in the 1960s. Consider the sets for such TV shows as *Love American Style*, *Laugh-In* and *Get Smart*, or just about any Doris Day rom-com.

There is no denying the beauty and richness of the book, or the significance of its effort to catalogue such an important designer's portfolio. Yet its very materiality raises all sorts of issues regarding the state of art publications and also the viability of print media generally. At a list price of \$200 and an oversized format (12 by 16 inches), it's a major investment in both dollars and shelf space. As a practical matter, it's the kind of thing you'd probably have to keep out as an art object rather than put in a bookcase.

While the debate over the relevance of actual, physical books rages on, publications that are primarily visual in content persist in print form, as increasingly more precious and rarefied objects. A publication like *Alexander Girard* attests to its publisher's optimism that a market for an oversized volume with a \$200-plus price tag still exists. Whether or not that's true, the fact that the publication doesn't exist in an electronic reader alternative seems aggressively non-modern, or at the very least antithetical to spreading Girard's gospel to another generation.

PHILIP BERGER IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR.



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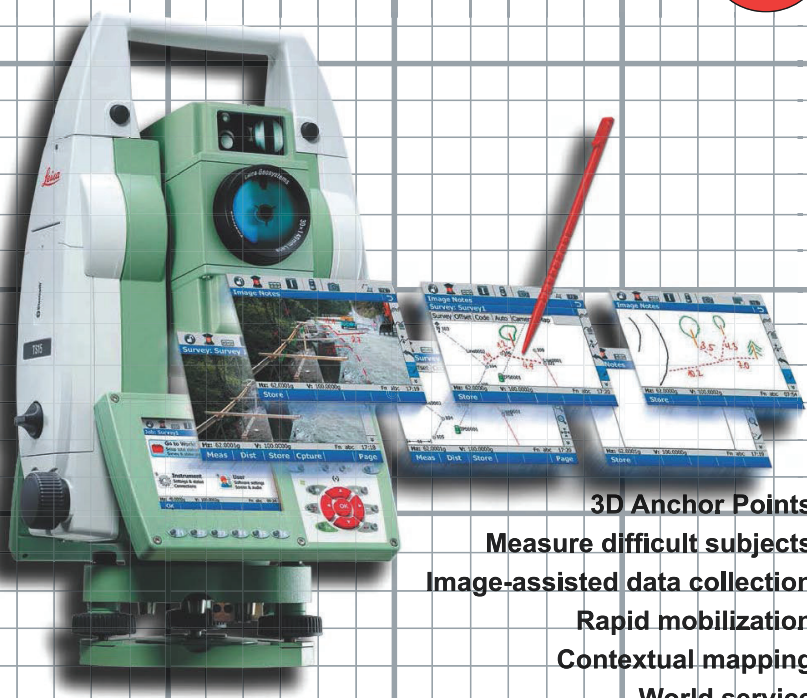
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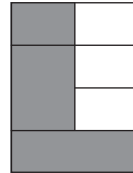
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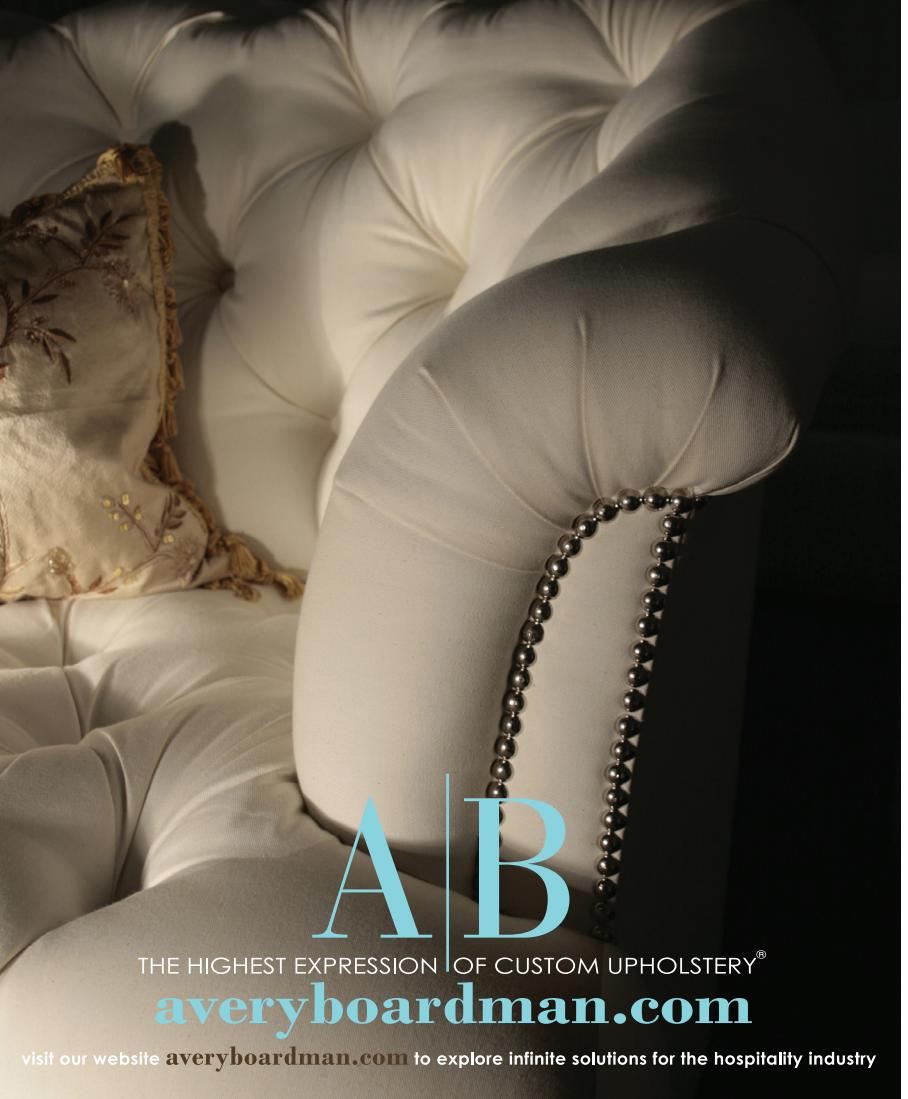


David Marell

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Spurning SPURA

Rendering of proposed plan for SPURA on the Lower East Side.

COURTESY NYC HPD

Forty-five years ago, when the lots on the south side of Delancey Street in the Lower East Side (LES) of Manhattan were first cleared for “urban renewal,” the prevailing planning theory called for “towers-in-the-park.” Indeed, that was what was installed slightly south and east of the site: one of the many bastardizations of Le Corbusier’s Plan Voisin for Paris. To the north and west, the landscape of low-rise walk-up tenements largely remained.

In between them is a hole, the black hole of the Lower East Side. If you arrive by the Williamsburg Bridge or emerge from the Delancey Street subway station, look south and you’ll see entire vacant blocks occupied mostly by parked off-duty delivery trucks.

This site, the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area (SPURA) has a long and contentious history. And finally a plan for its redevelopment is near approval. Community Board 3 and the City Planning Commission both recently gave the go-ahead.

Community groups and elected officials fought hard for a primary need of the neighborhood: affordable housing. Reaching a successful accord on that, though, seems to have distracted attention from the two disastrous backbones of the plan, both of which rely on old school ideas of urban renewal and zoning. Even more frustrating, newer enlightened policies are being promoted by the city’s planning department, while the outdated and discredited ones are still retained by another city organization which happens to be SPURA’s owner, the Economic Development Corporation (EDC).

The EDC policy derives from the continued presumption of the primacy of cars. A basic tenet of what’s known as transit-oriented development involves restricting the amount of parking in order to both discourage driving and congestion, and to free up funds and land for other, more valued uses.

But the EDC insists on pursuing the opposite track: requesting an exemption to provide *additional* parking spaces beyond what the current—yet to be updated—zoning allows. With the confluence of mass transit and existing density around the site, there is no justification for this outdated approach. (Please recall this is from the agency that brought us the white elephant of a parking structure sitting empty at the new Yankee Stadium.) People do not come to the LES by car to shop. Nor should we want them

to. Delancey is already one of the most dangerous and difficult to cross streets in the city. While the city is in the midst of some safety improvements following a rash of fatal accidents, adding parking and traffic will just worsen the situation.

There’s an even more significant flaw in the EDC’s master plan. Though it’s informed enough, thankfully, to avoid repeating the street life-draining nearby towers, it doesn’t really get that it’s not just a matter of building to the street line.

In the 1970s and 80s, the low-rise sections of the LES might have been mistaken for some of the worst areas of the South Bronx, replete with trash-filled vacant lots and burned out shells of six-story walk-ups. In the following 20 to 30 years, the neighborhood picked up dramatically, coat-tailing on the bubble economy.

Unlike some other Manhattan neighborhoods, the Lower East Side managed its mini-boom fairly gracefully, at least at first. Abandoned walk-ups that no longer had stairs to walk up were gutted and repopulated. Some of the vacant lots were “infilled” with new buildings similar in height to the adjacent survivors.

Yes, gentrification took place, but there was a bit of a difference here from the typical pattern. Because of a combination of tenant protection rules and the availability of vacant space, the gentrifiers (myself included) often ended up meshing into the existing fabric, which, in turn, was strengthened with newly infused economic vitality. It wasn’t a perfect evolution, to be sure. But the LES became a rare example of change without upheaval and, aside from the inevitable issue of rising rents, few questioned whether it was an improvement over the previous decades.

Things started to change in the mid-2000s. High-rises began to appear. Not on the city-owned SPURA parcels, but on nearby privately-owned property where developers had bought up the air rights from the surrounding low-rise buildings, and then stacked the accumulated floor area into heights that were far, far above the existing walk-ups. Several of the new towers were hotels, which frequently hosted raucous—often open-air rooftop—parties.

One could actually make an argument, unpopular as it might sound, that these towers are not the worst possible form of development for the LES. Concentrating the allowed construction into these small parcels has had the unintended side effect of preserving the majority of the adjacent

older, smaller buildings. Since they have sold their air rights, there is little incentive to tear them down to rebuild—the new buildings could not be any larger than the existing ones. In an odd way, the result is an urbanized version of the tower-in-the-park, except that the “park” is the existing fabric of the neighborhood.

The EDC—which in other undertakings is very supportive of local business development—is insisting on the inclusion of big-box space in SPURA, claiming they are required in order to “anchor” the shopping district. Never mind that the LES is a community, not merely a shopping district. The term anchor store comes from the world of shopping malls. But that approach doesn’t apply in an urban situation where the customers are already there and therefore don’t have to make the decision to travel a longer distance.

Increasing density in built areas is practically a given in planning circles. For a number of years planners and policy makers have emphasized smart growth, new urbanism, and now transit-oriented development. In general this logic is accepted as good policy. However, density is a positive factor only up to a point. Once a city or a neighborhood has achieved a density sufficient to support local businesses and mass transit, adding more to it does not bring additional benefits. It’s the backside of the diminishing returns curve where, really, the only ones who gain are property owners who can sell out, the developers who come in, and city governments that stand to reel in more taxes.

There is a subtler aspect to density and it is a major determinant of the quality of a community. It’s what urban theorist Richard Florida and others have started calling “Jacobs density,” named after Jane Jacobs, and what has also variously been called the “Popsicle test,” the “twenty-minute neighborhood,” and the “pub shed.” The counterpoint to Jacobs density is “crude density,” where the mere presence of tall, densely-packed buildings does not automatically create vitality or spur creativity and innovation. New Urbanist and architect Steve Mouzon refers to “walk appeal,” arguing that neighborhood quality is defined not just by how close services and amenities are, but by the appeal of the walk to get to and between them: Are you walking through a parking lot or an inactive street or sidewalk versus a streetscape full of things to see and do?

The LES is decidedly past that point of diminishing returns. Our sidewalks, streets, subway stops, and buses are not wanting for more people. Stores, for the most part, do not lack customers. Like virtually all of Manhattan and many parts of the outer boroughs, the LES has all the density and more that’s needed for a vital urban neighborhood.

Except, that is, in the blocks comprising SPURA. Mending the fabric of the LES by filling that half-century hole is wholly desirable. What’s not desirable is turning it into another version of Broadway on the Upper West Side or into a generic “modern” street you might find in any number of other cities.

But that’s what the plans for SPURA endorse. Looking at the renderings, which admittedly are not specific architectural proposals, you see block-long masses that

could be dropped in anywhere. And that’s precisely what the LES does not need.

You won’t find many chain stores in the LES. Few bank branches have opened. There’s a refreshing paucity of Starbucks and Duane Reades. Those are about the largest stores here, with the exception of Whole Foods, which occupies the entire ground floor of a post-millennial complex not unlike the ones envisioned for SPURA.

The wonderful thing about an urban street is the activity. That’s understood and accepted by all, it seems, except developers. There’s a vibrancy in seeing the unexpected or bumping into your neighbors. But the level of street life outside a long row of Bed, Bath & Beyond or Home Depot windows is nothing like what occurs where you have a different storefront entrance every 20 feet or so, where the owner hangs out and knows what’s going on in the neighborhood. The atmosphere in our tiny local pharmacy—where they know us and come out from behind the register to greet our dog—doesn’t compare to the antiseptic and Muzak’ed Rite Aid a few blocks away.

Some will say that discount retailers provide a service: more goods at lower prices. But that’s often an illusion, particularly when the big box forces locally owned stores out of business, causing the neighborhood to lose not just flavor but jobs and income as well. Never mind what happens when the discount chain’s distant office decides that the branch isn’t making quite enough profit and closes it, leaving a desolate stretch of unoccupied street, now with no shopping alternatives. Urban blocks can withstand and absorb a closed storefront or two when there are ten others still open. When a block-long store shutters, so does the life of the street.

Cities thrive on that life, or fail without it. Neighborhoods thrive on their individual character, not on imposed generic developments with mega stores.

Community Board 3’s resolution approving the SPURA plan understands this. In their “Conditions of Approval,” in addition to sections regarding affordable housing, the beloved Essex Street Market and other neighborhood needs, they strongly oppose big box stores. And their appended guidelines specifically restrict the location and size of “mid-box” stores and promote local service and convenience stores on the narrower streets.

But these are only guidelines and the EDC proposal, the one recently approved by the planning commission, does not appear to embrace them. Their vision for filling the LES’ black hole, in its bland suggested form and massing, and with its anti-urban emphasis on parking, has nothing to do with the neighborhood. It defies current precepts of urban design and place-making.

The next step in the approval process is the City Council, where the plan first goes through a committee and may emerge for a vote in November. This means it’s not too late to recognize the shortcomings of the proposal, while retaining the hard-won agreements on affordable housing. It’s not too late to make something that doesn’t merely fill a hole, but builds upon and strengthens the character of the LES.

DAVID BERGMAN IS AN ARCHITECT AND THE AUTHOR OF *SUSTAINABLE DESIGN: A CRITICAL GUIDE* (PRINCETON ARCHITECTURAL PRESS).

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Rendering of proposed plan for SPURA on the Lower East Side.

COURTESY NYC HPD

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In between them is a hole, the black hole of the Lower East Side. If you arrive by the Williamsburg Bridge or emerge from the Delancey Street subway station, look south and you’ll see entire vacant blocks occupied mostly by parked off-duty delivery trucks.

This site, the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area (SPURA) has a long and contentious history. And finally a plan for its redevelopment is near approval. Community Board 3 and the City Planning Commission both recently gave the go-ahead.

Community groups and elected officials fought hard for a primary need of the neighborhood: affordable housing. Reaching a successful accord on that, though, seems to have distracted attention from the two disastrous backbones of the plan, both of which rely on old school ideas of urban renewal and zoning. Even more frustrating, newer enlightened policies are being promoted by the city’s planning department, while the outdated and discredited ones are still retained by another city organization which happens to be SPURA’s owner, the Economic Development Corporation (EDC).

The EDC policy derives from the continued presumption of the primacy of cars. A basic tenet of what’s known as transit-oriented development involves restricting the amount of parking in order to both discourage driving and congestion, and to free up funds and land for other, more valued uses.

But the EDC insists on pursuing the opposite track: requesting an exemption to provide *additional* parking spaces beyond what the current—yet to be updated—zoning allows. With the confluence of mass transit and existing density around the site, there is no justification for this outdated approach. (Please recall this is from the agency that brought us the white elephant of a parking structure sitting empty at the new Yankee Stadium.) People do not come to the LES by car to shop. Nor should we want them

to. Delancey is already one of the most dangerous and difficult streets to cross in the city. While the city is in the midst of some safety improvements following a rash of fatal accidents, adding parking and traffic will just worsen the situation.

There’s an even more significant flaw in the EDC’s master plan. Though it’s informed enough, thankfully, to avoid repeating the street life-draining nearby towers, it doesn’t really get that it’s not just a matter of building to the street line.

In the 1970s and 80s, the low-rise sections of the LES might have been mistaken for some of the worst areas of the South Bronx, replete with trash-filled vacant lots and burned out shells of six-story walk-ups. In the following 20 to 30 years, the neighborhood picked up dramatically, coat-tailing on the bubble economy.

Unlike some other Manhattan neighborhoods, the Lower East Side managed its mini-boom fairly gracefully, at least at first. Abandoned walk-ups that no longer had stairs to walk up were gutted and repopulated. Some of the vacant lots were “infilled” with new buildings similar in height to the adjacent survivors.

Yes, gentrification took place, but there was a bit of a difference here from the typical pattern. Because of a combination of tenant protection rules and the availability of vacant space, the gentrifiers (myself included) often ended up meshing into the existing fabric, which, in turn, was strengthened with newly infused economic vitality. It wasn’t a perfect evolution, to be sure. But the LES became a rare example of change without upheaval and, aside from the inevitable issue of rising rents, few questioned whether it was an improvement over the previous decades.

Things started to change in the mid-2000s. High-rises began to appear. Not on the city-owned SPURA parcels, but on nearby privately-owned property where developers had bought up the air rights from the surrounding low-rise buildings, and then stacked the accumulated floor area into heights that were far, far above the existing walk-ups. Several of the new towers were hotels, which frequently hosted raucous—often open-air rooftop—parties.

One could actually make an argument, unpopular as it might sound, that these towers are not the worst possible form of development for the LES. Concentrating the allowed construction into these small parcels has had the unintended side effect of preserving the majority of the adjacent

older, smaller buildings. Since they have sold their air rights, there is little incentive to tear them down to rebuild—the new buildings could not be any larger than the existing ones. In an odd way, the result is an urbanized version of the tower-in-the-park, except that the “park” is the existing fabric of the neighborhood.

The EDC—which in other undertakings is very supportive of local business development—is insisting on the inclusion of big-box space in SPURA, claiming they are required in order to “anchor” the shopping district. Never mind that the LES is a community, not merely a shopping district. The term anchor store comes from the world of shopping malls. But that approach doesn’t apply in an urban situation where the customers are already there and therefore don’t have to make the decision to travel a longer distance.

Increasing density in built areas is practically a given in planning circles. For a number of years planners and policy makers have emphasized smart growth, new urbanism, and now transit-oriented development. In general this logic is accepted as good policy. However, density is a positive factor only up to a point. Once a city or a neighborhood has achieved a density sufficient to support local businesses and mass transit, adding more to it does not bring additional benefits. It’s the backside of the diminishing returns curve where, really, the only ones who gain are property owners who can sell out, the developers who come in, and city governments that stand to reel in more taxes.

There is a subtler aspect to density and it is a major determinant of the quality of a community. It’s what urban theorist Richard Florida and others have started calling “Jacobs density,” named after Jane Jacobs, and what has also variously been called the “Popsicle test,” the “twenty-minute neighborhood,” and the “pub shed.” The counterpoint to Jacobs density is “crude density,” where the mere presence of tall, densely-packed buildings does not automatically create vitality or spur creativity and innovation. New Urbanist and architect Steve Mouzon refers to “walk appeal,” arguing that neighborhood quality is defined not just by how close services and amenities are, but by the appeal of the walk to get to and between them: Are you walking through a parking lot or an inactive street or sidewalk versus a streetscape full of things to see and do?

The LES is decidedly past that point of diminishing returns. Our sidewalks, streets, subway stops, and buses are not wanting for more people. Stores, for the most part, do not lack customers. Like virtually all of Manhattan and many parts of the outer boroughs, the LES has all the density and more that’s needed for a vital urban neighborhood.

Except, that is, in the blocks comprising SPURA. Mending the fabric of the LES by filling that half-century hole is wholly desirable. What’s not desirable is turning it into another version of Broadway on the Upper West Side or into a generic “modern” street you might find in any number of other cities.

But that’s what the plans for SPURA endorse. Looking at the renderings, which admittedly are not specific architectural proposals, you see block-long masses that

could be dropped in anywhere. And that’s precisely what the LES does not need.

You won’t find many chain stores in the LES. Few bank branches have opened. There’s a refreshing paucity of Starbucks and Duane Reades. Those are about the largest stores here, with the exception of Whole Foods, which occupies the entire ground floor of a post-millennial complex not unlike the ones envisioned for SPURA.

The wonderful thing about an urban street is the activity. That’s understood and accepted by all, it seems, except developers. There’s a vibrancy in seeing the unexpected or bumping into your neighbors. But the level of street life outside a long row of Bed, Bath & Beyond or Home Depot windows is nothing like what occurs where you have a different storefront entrance every 20 feet or so, where the owner hangs out and knows what’s going on in the neighborhood. The atmosphere in our tiny local pharmacy—where they know us and come out from behind the register to greet our dog—doesn’t compare to the antiseptic and Muzak’ed Rite Aid a few blocks away.

Some will say that discount retailers provide a service: more goods at lower prices. But that’s often an illusion, particularly when the big box forces locally owned stores out of business, causing the neighborhood to lose not just flavor but jobs and income as well. Never mind what happens when the discount chain’s distant office decides that the branch isn’t making quite enough profit and closes it, leaving a desolate stretch of unoccupied street, now with no shopping alternatives. Urban blocks can withstand and absorb a closed storefront or two when there are ten others still open. When a block-long store shutters, so does the life of the street.

Cities thrive on that life, or fail without it. Neighborhoods thrive on their individual character, not on imposed generic developments with mega stores.

Community Board 3’s resolution approving the SPURA plan understands this. In their “Conditions of Approval,” in addition to sections regarding affordable housing, the beloved Essex Street Market and other neighborhood needs, they strongly oppose big box stores. And their appended guidelines specifically restrict the location and size of “mid-box” stores and promote local service and convenience stores on the narrower streets.

But these are only guidelines and the EDC proposal, the one recently approved by the planning commission, does not appear to embrace them. Their vision for filling the LES’ black hole, in its bland suggested form and massing, and with its anti-urban emphasis on parking, has nothing to do with the neighborhood. It defies current precepts of urban design and place-making.

The next step in the approval process is the City Council, where the plan first goes through a committee and may emerge for a vote in November. This means it’s not too late to recognize the shortcomings of the proposal, while retaining the hard-won agreements on affordable housing. It’s not too late to make something that doesn’t merely fill a hole, but builds upon and strengthens the character of the LES.

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